

B1 sub C4
an unembedded heating element positioned between the front jaw release sheet and the front jaw, the heating element having a cross-sectional thickness no less than about 0.55 times the cross-sectional thickness of the resilient portion.

33. (Amended) A device for heat sealing at least two thermoplastic films together, the device comprising:

B2
front and rear opposing jaws moveable between an open position defining a zone for inserting the at least two films between the front and rear jaws and a closed position in which the front and rear jaws are proximate each other to compress the at least two thermoplastic films together, the rear jaw including a resilient portion facing the front jaw;

a front jaw release sheet positioned between the insertion zone and the front jaw when the front and rear jaws are in the open position, the front jaw release sheet including an unreinforced release material consisting essentially of fluoroplastic material; and

a heating element positioned between the front jaw release sheet and the front jaw.

42. (Twice Amended) A device for simultaneously heat sealing and severing at least two thermoplastic films, the device comprising:

B3 sub C5
front and rear opposing jaws moveable between an open position defining a zone for inserting the at least two films between the front and rear jaws and a closed position in which the front and rear jaws are proximate each other to compress the at least two thermoplastic films together, the rear jaw having a resilient portion facing the front jaw, the resilient portion having a given cross-sectional thickness; and

an unembedded heating element positioned between the insertion zone and the front jaw, the heating element having a cross-sectional thickness no less than about 0.55 times the cross-sectional thickness of the resilient portion.